

# **Navigating Uncertainty**

Lesson 9

Jeremiah 26-29

November 8, 2020

## **Living Well in Disturbing Times**

### **Introduction**

Every parent knows that sometimes it's necessary to move a child from comfort to discomfort to change their hearts and behavior. Children can become prideful and ungrateful when they forget they are fortunate to have parents that love them. Parents know the goal of discipline is not retaliation, but rather the softening of the child's heart.

In the same way, Judah became rebellious, prideful, and forgot its first love: Yahweh, God the Father. After years of prophetic warnings, God did what he said he would do and exiled the nation of Judah to Babylon. This punishment was hard to accept for Judah. Instead, they eagerly accepted the words of false prophets who said they would return home shortly. This made it difficult for Jeremiah to tell them the truth: they would be in Babylon for 70 years.

God's promise to Judah was that He had not forgotten them, and He had grand plans for them. He knew that after the banishment to Babylon, the nation of Judah would have a soft heart eager to worship Him. This was the goal of the exile: to soften the heart of Judah to restore its relationship with God.

Similarly, our hearts sometimes become hard when we forget the work that Jesus did for us. When this happens, we can be separated from Him and feel discomfort, despair, and even hopelessness. When we return to a place of gratitude, our hearts are returned to a place of rest in the Lord.

***Memory verse: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'—Jeremiah 29:11***

Pray and read Jeremiah 26-29. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

### **What does the passage say?**

1. Briefly summarize what God instructed Jeremiah to tell Judah. (Jeremiah 26:2-6, 12-22)
2. How did the priests and prophets respond? (Jeremiah 26:7-9)
3. What were the false prophets telling the nation of Judah? (Jeremiah 27:14-16, 28:1-4)
4. What promises did the Lord give to the people of Judah that would give them hope when they went into exile in Babylon? (Jeremiah 29:10-14)
5. What did God say would happen as a part of Judah's return from exile? (Jeremiah 29:12-13)
6. What did the Lord say that He would do to the prophets that gave false hopes of an early and easy return to Jerusalem? (Jeremiah 29:15-17, 21, 31-32)

## What does the passage mean?

1. God told Jeremiah to give this message in the temple courtyard, the most public place possible for Jeremiah to speak. God also told Jeremiah to convey the exact message, word-for-word. Why was it so important to God that Judah heard his requirement of obedience? (Jeremiah 26:2)
  
2. The priests and prophets were offended by Jeremiah's declaration that Judah must repent, and they accused him of false prophecy, which was punishable by death. Why were they so reluctant to hear Jeremiah's call to obedience and eager to accuse him of treason? (Deuteronomy 18:20; Jeremiah 26:7-11)
  
3. God told Jeremiah to make a yoke and wear it when he delivered His command to Judah and the surrounding kingdoms. The yoke was a symbol of submission and humility. How was God's command to Judah that they submit themselves to Babylon such a difficult message for Judah to hear? (Jeremiah 27:1-7)

4. Hananiah's false prophecy showed how reluctant Judah was to accept God's command to go to Babylon in submission. Why was Judah so resistant? (Jeremiah 28:1-4, 10-11)
  
5. God's banishment of Judah to Babylon did not leave Judah without hope. It was a great opportunity for Judah to grow in faith and trust God based upon His promises and His commandments. How do you think most Jewish exiles would have received God's promise of returning to their home and a restored relationship with God after 70 years? (Jeremiah 29:4-7, 10-14)

### **Applying the passage**

1. Judah's struggle in going to and staying in Babylon was that they had expectations of their own. God made it in his instructions and words of hope that He had plans for them. How hard is it for you when God's plans run against your well-laid plans? (Jeremiah 29:4-7, 10-14)

